

Appln No.: 09/869,365
Amendment Dated: November 18, 2003
Reply to Office Action of July 18, 2003

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-17 have been cancelled.

18. (previously presented) Gas discharge tube comprising at least two electrodes and at least one hollow insulator fastened to at least one of the electrodes, wherein said at least two electrodes have a chemically inert surface, and wherein the chemically inert surface has been applied to the electrodes using a physical vapour deposition or a chemical vapour deposition of coating material .

19. (previously presented) Gas discharge tube according to claim 18, wherein the coating material is selected from the group of carbon, gold, and platinum.

20. (previously presented) Gas discharge tube according to claim 19, wherein the coating material is carbon and said carbon is present as a polymorph of carbon.

21. (previously presented) Gas discharge tube according to claim 20, wherein the carbon has been applied using sputtering.

22. (previously presented) Gas discharge tube according to claim 20, wherein the carbon is applied in combination with a metal.

23. (previously presented) Gas discharge tube according to claim 22, wherein the metal is chromium or titanium.

24. (currently amended) Gas discharge tube according to claim 18, wherein the coating material is carbon and said carbon is present as a polymorph of carbon.

25. (previously presented) Gas discharge tube according to claim 24, wherein the carbon is present as graphite in combination with a metal.

26. (previously presented) Gas discharge tube according to claim 24, wherein the carbon has been applied using sputtering.

27. (previously presented) Gas discharge tube according to claim 24, wherein the carbon is present in a layer having a thickness of 1 μm .

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28. (previously presented) Method for the manufacture of gas discharge tubes comprising at least two electrodes, and at least one hollow insulator fastened to the electrodes, wherein said at least two electrodes have a chemically inert surface, said method comprising the step of applying a coating material to form the chemically inert surface onto the electrodes using a physical vapour deposition or a chemical vapour deposition process.

29. (previously presented) Method according to claim 28, wherein the coating material is selected from the group of carbon, gold, and platinum.

30. (previously presented) Method according to claim 29, wherein the coating material is carbon in combination with a metal.

31. (previously presented) Method according to claim 30, wherein the metal is chromium or titanium.

32. (previously presented) Method according to claim 29, wherein the coating material is carbon, and said carbon is present as polymorph of carbon.

33. (previously presented) Method according to claim 32, wherein the carbon is present as graphite in combination with a metal.

34. (previously presented) Method according to claim 29, wherein the carbon has been applied using sputtering.

35. (previously presented) Method according to claim 29, wherein the deposition of carbon takes place in an atmosphere of methane.

36. (previously presented) Method according to claim 29, wherein the carbon is present in a layer having a thickness of 1 μm .

37. (canceled)